USDA NRCS

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Conservation Across America

Pasture & Hayland Planting

Job Sheet – 512

Texas A&M Grass Images, Bioinformatics Working Group; Photo from Forages 5th Ed. CD Companion

Kleingrass

DESCRIPTION- Kleingrass, *Panicum coloratum*, is a warm season perennial bunchgrass native to South Africa. The leaves and leaf sheaths may have glandular based hairs. Kleingrass stems are slender, very leafy, and the stem nodes are often dark in color. The plant reaches about 4 feet at maturity. The leaves remain green late in the fall and plants resume growth in late winter or early spring. It reproduces by seed and tillers. Kleingrass is very palatable, makes excellent quality hay with 5-6 ton annual production potential on well adapted sites, and when used as pasture it has moderate fertility requirements.

ADAPTATION- Selection-75, kleingrass is the best adapted variety to the Blackland, Claypan, and Coastal regions of Texas. It grows best on loamy to clayey soils. Kleingrass is fairly drought tolerant, but has somewhat poor cold tolerance. It should not be planted north of a line between Amarillo and Dallas, or west of a line connecting Odessa, Bracketville, and Laredo.

SEEDBED PREPARATION- Flat break or disk the land to destroy all weedy vegetation. If soil fertility levels are low, lime, phosphorous and potassium should be incorporated during seedbed preparation. Firm the seedbed with a cultipacker or roller prior to planting. A well-prepared seedbed is needed for good grass establishment. Recommended herbicides may be used to prepare the area if a no-till drill will be used for planting.

PLANTING- Seed may be planted into a conventionally prepared seedbed with a grass seed drill, or broadcast with a broadcast seeder. A no-till drill may be used on undisturbed sites. Tilled soil must be firmed with press wheels, cultipacker, or roller immediately after planting. The seeding rate for Selection 75 is 1.5 lb PLS/ac, and the seeding rate for Verde is 1.7 lb PSL/ac. Planting dates are March 1-May 15 for Zone A. Planting depth should not exceed ¼".

FERTILIZER AND LIME- Kleingrass pH range is 5.5-8.0. Nitrogen (N) application will vary depending upon site and intensity of management. For pasture, a moderate level of production can be attained with a 40 Lb/Ac N application in the spring and 40 Lb/Ac N application after each grazing cycle, for hay, 50 Lb/Ac N in the spring and 50 Lb/Ac N after each cutting. Other nutrients should be added, as needed, according to a current soil test. If lime, phosphorous, potassium, or other nutrients are needed before planting, incorporate them during seedbed preparation.

MANAGEMENT- Protect from grazing until plants are well rooted, and not easily pulled up by livestock. Control weeds to reduce competition. Do not apply herbicides until most plants reach the 4-leaf stage. Follow all label directions when using herbicides. When grazing to control weeds, stock the area heavily for short periods; do not graze shorter than 6 inches during the establishment year. After establishment, bermudagrass should not be grazed until it is at least 8 inches tall, and it can be grazed to 4.0-6.0 inches in a rotational system. Hay may be cut to a 4.0- inch height. Grazing should be on approximately a 25-35 day schedule. Hay should be cut when the grass is at the boot stage or pre-boot.